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mulator of wealth—no longer a man of the class which a recent writer somewhat ferociously describes as “prehensile conservatives” who have “made good in the distribution of pecuniary flotsam.” If it prove true that the best remedy for unsatisfactory conditions lies in heavily taxing the incomes of the rich in order to obtain funds for carrying out expensive social legislation, doubtless American men of wealth will learn to bear their share of the general burden as cheerfully as do the burghers of German cities. But America must solve her problems in her own way—that is, democratically. Just how she is to do this is the really important question—and it is a question which Dr. Howe in the treatise under consideration does not discuss. “This book,” writes the author, “is not a plea for socialism. . . . I believe in democracy.” Nevertheless, the tendency, if not the conscious aim, of his book is to awaken admiration for the smooth and effective working of the German system of social laws. How far the success of the German methods are dependent upon that absolutism, the danger of which he fully recognizes, and how far, aside from this, the German methods are applicable to American conditions, Dr. Howe does not attempt to show.

In short, the book *Socialized Germany* is simply an excellent descriptive treatise, with an undertone of admiration for efficiency and of urgency toward stronger public spirit, wider vision. In this respect it resembles the author's specific discussions of city government. But it is decidedly less definite in its bearing upon American conditions, and hence much vaguer in its message, than, for example, Mr. Howe's *European Cities at Work*. For the basis of comparison upon which the work depends for its value and meaning is relatively broad and ill-understood.

LIFE AND LETTERS IN THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE. By Christopher Hare. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915.

Just as the spirit of the Italian Renaissance seems to have been intoxicating to the men who lived in it, so to modern men who write about it the period seems to be somewhat overstimulating. The theme acts as a challenge to the writer's rhetorical powers; it spurs him to ecstasies of appreciation and to spurts of romantic enthusiasm. A sort of licensed exaggeration prevails, as it does in only a little less degree in popular books about ancient Greece. For to be enthusiastic about the Athens of Pericles or the Florence of Lorenzo de' Medici is thought to be good for the soul. Thus the impression of life in the Italian Renaissance which the unlearned reader acquires is likely to be portentous and dazzling—romantic but hardly lifelike. For the writers show this life through a splendid mist.

Life and Letters in the Italian Renaissance, by Mrs. Marion Andrews (“Christopher Hare”), neither dispels the mist nor adds

particularly to its lustre. Mrs. Andrews is the author of numerous books dealing with the more romantic aspects of the period in question. These books of hers—among which may be mentioned *Ladies of the Italian Renaissance*, *The Romance of a Medici Warrior*, *Courts and Camps of the Italian Renaissance*, *Men and Women of the Italian Reformation*—have achieved a success not ill-merited. The author has read widely within her field and has gone to the sources, moreover. In the present volume, her criticism and comment are for the most part rather unilluminating. The popular lyrics, the rustic idylls, and the classical fables of the Golden Age need for their proper appreciation some measure of interpretation, especially when they are read only in rather prosy metrical translation. This interpretation Mrs. Andrews does not adequately supply. She does, on the other hand, provide her readers with too much formal eulogy of a kind that is rather boring. If she were dealing with such writers as Homer or Chaucer, this fault might be more easily overlooked. Their charm can be explained by nobody and is felt by everybody. But the contrary is true of the elegant and sophisticated verses written by Lorenzo de' Medici, Jacopo Sannazarro, or Angelo Poliziano. To dwell upon obvious sentiments is not the road to appreciation of literary productions so rarely and curiously beautiful as these; and it is hard to forgive Mrs. Andrews for having impressed very heavily upon her readers the artificiality of the Golden Age without really putting them in touch with its vital enthusiasm. The author, too, is prone to quote, with none too well-defined purpose, rather long extracts from dedications, letters of condolence, or of courtly compliment, and the like—extracts that throw little direct light on life or character.

By far the most rewarding part of the book is that wherein Mrs. Andrews discusses the romantic epic, describing the *Morgante Maggiore* of Pulci, the *Orlando Innamorata* of Boiardo, and the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto. Particularly in dealing with the work of Ariosto she reacts to the fullness and richness of her theme; her style becomes lively, she reveals a sense of proportion, and she imparts to her readers something of the imaginative appeal and the satiric humor of the original. The chapter, too, upon Machiavelli is biographically informing, correct in viewpoint, and reasonably lifelike in its depiction of character.

The author seems to have aimed at writing an honestly instructive and moderately entertaining book of the popular sort. In this she has measurably succeeded; but her work is marred by diffuseness and by conventionality of comment—qualities by no means essential in popular writing. The author's manner is sometimes rather trying, in that it urgently solicits interest without always inspiring it.